

Town Meeting Coordinating Committee
Subcommittee on Policies and Procedures
Minutes for Tuesday, August 6, 2016

Present: Chris Riddle, Jacqueline Maidana, Janet McGowan, Adrienne Terrizzi, John Hornik
Absent: Michael Greenebaum, Amber KaCey, Maurianne Adams
Guest: Mary Streeter

AGENDA

1. Review and approve July 25 minutes.
2. Review Charter Commission meeting.
3. Review Subcommittee membership, purpose, goals.
4. Initial discussion of Town Meeting: What works, what should be improved
5. Public comment.
6. Topics the chair did not reasonably anticipate 48 hours before the meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 4:37 PM.

1. Minutes of July 25 meeting reviewed and approved (5-0)

2. Charter Commission Meeting – Discussion

Presentation on TM and TMCC by Peggy

Jim Pistrang spoke well, strong proponent of TM

- Strength: TM assures slow, thoughtful change
- Less frequent meetings are not the answer
- Recommend inviting Jim to our next meeting

Welcoming to TMCC Policy Subcommittee

Janet promoted talking to TM members

Maurianne's ideas distributed by Chris in hard copy**

Recommend reviewing Town Meeting Study Committee Report, October, 1997 (Janet)

Look for other studies (Mary)

Also, see Michael's TM Blog: What is good, what changes have been made

[<http://michaelgreenebaum.blogspot.com/search?updated-min=2015-01-01T00:00:00-08:00&updated-max=2016-01-01T00:00:00-08:00&max-results=9>]

3. Review Subcommittee's membership, purpose, goals: Michael's draft approved
Next Meeting: Review Michael's proposed timeline

4. Initial Discussion of Town Meeting: What works, what should be improved
See Notes in table immediately below:

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Improvements</u>
Anyone can get elected	Teach Town Meeting History <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accomplishments• Self-reforms
Long term members/ older provide memory, experience, wisdom, patience	

<p>More diverse than other elected bodies—or...</p> <p>Representative of “Amherst voters”; people who are interested in and engaged in local issues</p> <p>Reflects current mood—issues?</p> <p>Big enough to REPRESENT all/more points of view in town</p> <p>Volunteer</p> <p>Many, many voices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged in local government • Speaking • Learning about local government <p>Hold Town staff accountable</p> <p>Powerful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves budgets with scrutiny • Passes needed bylaws <p>Diffuse power structure (many, not few)</p> <p>Gives people a voice in government</p> <p>Easy on ramp to government</p>	
<p><u>Problems</u></p> <p>Is it a problem? What’s the consequence?</p> <p>Burdens Town staff</p> <p>Anyone can get elected (except Pcts 7&8)</p> <p>Not REPRESENTATIVE enough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of who? How? • Not diverse, reflective of population • Non-competitive seats • Perceived decline in voter turnout • Verify: Mary distributed a table with data on the history of voter turnout in all Town elections; shows variability from year to year.* • Compare to other Towns 	<p><u>Solutions</u></p> <p>Alter precincts/districts; history of doing this</p> <p>Students are not interested in Town Government; Need acceptance of lack of student participation (Pcts. 3, 4, 10)</p> <p>Increase number of TM candidates</p> <p>Move Town elections to November</p>

<p>Inefficient/waste of time</p> <p>Zoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't get thru • Poorly drafted • Poorly explained • Poorly understood • Complicated 	
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5. Public Comment: None

6. Topics Not Anticipated: None

Documents distributed during the meeting:

*Amherst Voter Turnout – Elections 1991-2016

**Memo from Maurianne Adams: Possible Topics for Reforming Town Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 6:07 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted, John Hornik, Temporary Secretary